

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2013**

**SESSION LAW 2014-112
HOUSE BILL 1194**

AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 135-5(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Election of Optional Allowance. – With the provision that until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, or his first retirement check has been cashed, any member may elect to receive his benefits in a retirement allowance payable throughout life, or he may elect to receive the actuarial equivalent of such retirement allowance, including any special retirement allowance, in a reduced allowance payable throughout life under the provisions of one of the options set forth below. The election of Option 2, 3, or 6 or nomination of the person thereunder shall be revoked if such person nominated dies prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or until the first retirement check has been cashed. Such election may be revoked by the member prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or until his first retirement check has been cashed. Provided, however, in the event a member has elected Option 2, 3, or 5 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death, and the spouse predeceases the member after the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed, if the member remarries he or she may request to nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option, within 90 days of the remarriage, and may nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees within 120 days of the remarriage. The new nomination shall be effective on the first day of the month in which it is made and shall provide for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new nomination. Any member having elected Option 2, 3, 5, or 6 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death may, after divorce from his or her spouse, revoke the nomination and elect a new option, effective on the first day of the month in which the new option is elected, providing for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new option. Except as provided in this section, the member may not change the member's retirement benefit option or the member's designated beneficiary for survivor benefits, if any, after the member has cashed the first retirement check or after the 25th day of the month following the month in which the first check is mailed, whichever comes first.

Option 1.(a) In the Case of a Member Who Retires prior to July 1, 1963. – If he dies before he has received in annuity payments the present value of his annuity as it was at the time of his retirement, the balance shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

(b) In the Case of a Member Who Retires on or after July 1, 1963, but prior to July 1, 1993. – If he dies within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120 thereof for each month for which he has received a retirement allowance payment, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees; or



Option 2. Upon his death his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement, provided that if the person selected is other than his spouse the reduced retirement allowance payable to the member shall not be less than one half of the retirement allowance without optional modification which would otherwise be payable to him; or

Option 3. Upon his death, one half of his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of, and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement; or

Option 4. Adjustment of Retirement Allowance for Social Security Benefits. – Until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, any member may elect to convert his benefit otherwise payable on his account after retirement into a retirement allowance of equivalent actuarial value of such amount that with his benefit under Title II of the Federal Social Security Act, he will receive, so far as possible, approximately the same amount per year before and after the earliest age at which he becomes eligible, effective as of the first of the month following the month of initial entitlement, upon application therefor, to receive a social security benefit.

Option 5. For Members Retiring Prior to July 1, 1993. – The member may elect to receive a reduced retirement allowance under the conditions of Option 2 or Option 3, as provided for above, with the modification that if both he and the person nominated die within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120 thereof for each month for which a retirement allowance has been paid, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

Option 6. A member may elect either Option 2 or Option 3 with the added provision that in the event the designated beneficiary predeceases the member, the retirement allowance payable to the member after the designated beneficiary's death shall be equal to the retirement allowance which would have been payable had the member not elected the option.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved and following receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits (Form 6-E or Form 7-E) but prior to the cashing of the first benefit check, the retirement benefit shall be payable as provided by the member's election of benefits under this subsection.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved but prior to the receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits (Form 6-E or Form 7-E), properly acknowledged and filed by the member, the member's designated beneficiary for a return of accumulated contributions may elect to receive the benefit, if only one beneficiary is eligible to receive the return of accumulated contributions. If more than one beneficiary is eligible to receive the return of accumulated contributions, the administrator or executor of the member's estate will select an option and name the beneficiary or beneficiaries."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 128-27(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Election of Optional Allowance. – With the provision that until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, or his first retirement check has been cashed, any member may elect to receive his benefits in a retirement allowance payable throughout life, or he may elect to receive the actuarial equivalent of such retirement allowance, including any special retirement allowance, in a reduced allowance payable throughout life under the provisions of one of the Options set forth below. The election of Option 2, 3, or 6 or nomination of the person thereunder shall be revoked if such person nominated dies prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed. Such election may be revoked by the member prior to the date the first payment becomes normally due or his first retirement check has been cashed. Provided, however, in the event a member has elected Option 2, 3, or 5 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death, and the spouse predeceases the member after the first payment becomes normally due or the first retirement check has been cashed, if the member remarries he or she may request to nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option, within 90 days of the remarriage, and may nominate a new spouse to receive the retirement allowance under the previously elected option by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees within 120 days of the remarriage. The new nomination shall be effective on the first day of the month in which it is

made and shall provide for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new nomination. Any member having elected Option 2, 3, 5, or 6 and nominated his or her spouse to receive a retirement allowance upon the member's death may, after divorce from his or her spouse, revoke the nomination and elect a new option, effective on the first day of the month in which the new option is elected, providing for a retirement allowance computed to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement allowance in effect immediately prior to the effective date of the new option. Except as provided in this section, the member may not change the member's retirement benefit option or the member's designated beneficiary for survivor benefits, if any, after the member has cashed the first retirement check or after the 25th day of the month following the month in which the first check is mailed, whichever comes first.

Option one.

- (a) In the Case of a Member Who Retires prior to July 1, 1965. – If he dies before he has received in annuity payments the present value of his annuity as it was at the time of his retirement, the balance shall be paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees or, if none, to his legal representative.
- (b) In the Case of a Member Who Retires on or after July 1, 1965, but prior to July 1, 1993. – If he dies within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less one one-hundred-twentieth thereof for each month for which he has received a retirement allowance payment, shall be paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees or, if none, to his legal representative; or

Option two. Upon his death his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement, provided that if the person selected is other than his spouse the reduced retirement allowance payable to the member shall not be less than one half of the retirement allowance without optional modification which would otherwise be payable to him; or

Option three. Upon his death, one half of his reduced retirement allowance shall be continued throughout the life of, and paid to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees at the time of his retirement; or

Option four. Adjustment of Retirement Allowance for Social Security Benefits. – Until the first payment on account of any benefit becomes normally due, any member may elect to convert his benefit otherwise payable on his account after retirement into a retirement allowance of equivalent actuarial value of such amount that with his benefit under Title II of the Federal Social Security Act, he will receive, so far as possible, approximately the same amount per year before and after the earliest age at which he becomes eligible, effective as of the first of the month following the month of initial entitlement, upon application therefor, to receive a social security benefit.

Option five. For Members Retiring prior to July 1, 1993. – The member may elect to receive a reduced retirement allowance under the conditions of Option two or Option three, as provided for above, with the modification that if both he and the person nominated die within 10 years from his retirement date, an amount equal to his accumulated contributions at retirement, less 1/120th thereof for each month for which a retirement allowance has been paid, shall be paid to his legal representatives or to such person as he shall nominate by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees.

Option six. A member may elect either Option two or Option three with the added provision that in the event the designated beneficiary predeceases the member, the retirement allowance payable to the member after the designated beneficiary's death shall be equal to the retirement allowance which would have been payable had the member not elected the option.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved and following receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits (Form 6-E or Form 7-E) but prior to the cashing of the first benefit check, the retirement benefit shall be payable as provided by the member's election of benefits under this subsection.

Upon the death of a member after the effective date of a retirement for which the member has been approved but prior to the receipt by the Board of Trustees of an election of benefits

(Form 6-E or Form 7-E), properly acknowledged and filed by the member, the member's designated beneficiary for a return of accumulated contributions may elect to receive the benefit, if only one beneficiary is eligible to receive the return of accumulated contributions. If more than one beneficiary is eligible to receive the return of accumulated contributions, the administrator or executor of the member's estate will select an option and name the beneficiary or beneficiaries."

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 135-8(f) reads as rewritten:

"(f) Collection of Contributions. –

(1) The collection of members' contributions shall be as follows:

a. Each employer shall cause to be deducted on each and every payroll of a member for each and every payroll subsequent to the date of establishment of the Retirement System the contributions payable by such member as provided in this Chapter, and the employer shall draw his warrant for the amount so deducted, payable to the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System of North Carolina, and shall transmit the same, together with schedule of the contributions, on such forms as prescribed.

(2) The collection of employers' contributions shall be made as follows:

a. Upon the basis of each actuarial valuation provided herein there shall be prepared biennially and certified to the Department of Administration a statement of the total amount necessary for the ensuing biennium to the pension accumulation and expense funds, as provided under subsections (d) and (f) of this section, and these funds shall be handled and disbursed in accordance with the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes.

b. Until the first valuation has been made and the rates computed as provided in subsection (d) of this section, the amount payable by employers on account of the normal and accrued liability contributions shall be five and fifty-one one-hundredths percent (5.51%) of the payroll of all teachers and three and sixteen one-hundredths percent (3.16%) for other State employees.

c. Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 257, s. 13.

d. Each board of education in each county and each board of education in each city in which teachers or other employees of the schools receive compensation for services in the public schools from sources other than the appropriation of the State of North Carolina shall pay the Board of Trustees of the State Retirement System such rate of their respective salaries as are paid those of other employees.

e. Each employer shall transmit monthly to the State Retirement System on account of each employee, who is a member of this System, an amount sufficient to cover the normal contribution and the accrued liability contribution of each member employed by such employer for the preceding month.

(3) In the event the employee or employer contributions required under this section are not received by the date set by the Board of Trustees, the Board shall assess the employer with a ~~penalty~~ penalty, in lieu of interest, of 1% per month with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). The Board may waive one penalty per employer every five years if the Board finds that the employer has consistently demonstrated good-faith efforts to comply with the set deadline. If within 90 days after request therefor by the Board any employer shall not have provided the System with the records and other information required hereunder or if the full accrued amount of the contributions provided for under this section due from members employed by an employer or from an employer other than the State shall not have been received by the System from the chief fiscal officer of such employer within 30 days after the last due date as herein provided, then, notwithstanding anything herein or in the provisions of any other law to the contrary, upon notification by the Board to the State Treasurer as to the default of such employer as herein provided, any distributions which might otherwise be

made to such employer from any funds of the State shall be withheld from such employer until notice from the Board to the State Treasurer that such employer is no longer in default."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 128-30(g) reads as rewritten:

"(g) Collection of Contributions. –

(1) The collection of members' contributions shall be as follows:

a. Each employer shall cause to be deducted on each and every payroll of a member for each and every payroll subsequent to the date of participation in the Retirement System the contributions payable by such member as provided in this Article. Each employer shall certify to the treasurer of said employer on each and every payroll a statement as vouchers for the amount so deducted.

b. The treasurer of each employer on the authority from the employer shall make deductions from salaries of members as provided in this Article and shall transmit monthly, or at such time as the Board of Trustees shall designate, the amount specified to be deducted, to the secretary-treasurer of the Board of Trustees. The secretary-treasurer of the Board of Trustees after making a record of all such receipts shall deposit them in a bank or banks selected by said Board of Trustees for use according to the provisions of this Article.

(2) The collections of employers' contributions shall be made as follows: Upon the basis of each actuarial valuation provided herein the Board of Trustees shall annually prepare and certify to each employer a statement of the total amount necessary for the ensuing fiscal year to the pension accumulation fund as provided under subsection (d) of this section. Such employer contributions shall be transmitted to the secretary-treasurer of the Board of Trustees together with the employee deductions as provided under sub-subdivision b. of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(3) In the event the employee or employer contributions required under this section are not received by the date set by the Board of Trustees, the Board shall assess the employer with a ~~penalty~~ penalty, in lieu of interest, of 1% per month with a minimum penalty of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). The Board may waive one penalty per employer every five years if the Board finds that the employer has consistently demonstrated good-faith efforts to comply with the set deadline. If within 90 days after request therefor by the Board any employer shall not have provided the System with the records and other information required hereunder or if the full accrued amount of the contributions provided for under this section due from members employed by an employer or from an employer shall not have been received by the System from the chief fiscal officer of such employer within 30 days after the last due date as herein provided, then, notwithstanding anything herein or in the provisions of any other law to the contrary, upon notification by the Board to the State Treasurer as to the default of such employer as herein provided, any distributions which might otherwise be made to such employer, or the municipality or county of which such employer is an integral part, from any funds of the State or any funds collected by the State shall be withheld from such employer until notice from the Board to the State Treasurer that such employer is no longer in default."

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 135-5(l) reads as rewritten:

"(l) Death Benefit Plan. – There is hereby created a Group Life Insurance Plan (hereinafter called the "Plan") which is established as an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System and under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in their capacity as trustees under the Group Life Insurance Plan, of the death, in service, of a member who had completed at least one full calendar year of membership in the Retirement System, there shall be paid to such person as he shall have nominated by electronic submission prior to completing 10 years of service in a form approved by the Board of Trustees or by written designation duly acknowledged and filed with the Board of Trustees, if such person is living at the time of the member's death, otherwise to

the member's legal representatives, a death benefit. Such death benefit shall be equal to the greater of:

- (1) The compensation on which contributions were made by the member during the calendar year preceding the year in which his death occurs, or
- (2) The greatest compensation on which contributions were made by the member during a 12-month period of service within the 24-month period of service ending on the last day of the month preceding the month in which his last day of actual service occurs;
- (3), (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session, 1984), c. 1049, s. 2.

subject to a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) and to a maximum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Such death benefit shall be payable apart and separate from the payment of the member's accumulated contributions under the System on his death pursuant to the provisions of subsection (f) of this section. For the purpose of the Plan, a member shall be deemed to be in service at the date of his death if his death occurs within 180 days from the last day of his actual service.

The death benefit provided in this subsection (l) shall not be payable, notwithstanding the member's compliance with all the conditions set forth in the preceding paragraph, if his death occurs

- (1) After December 31, 1968 and after he has attained age 70; or
- (2) After December 31, 1969 and after he has attained age 69; or
- (3) After December 31, 1970 and after he has attained age 68; or
- (4) After December 31, 1971 and after he has attained age 67; or
- (5) After December 31, 1972 and after he has attained age 66; or
- (6) After December 31, 1973 and after he has attained age 65; or
- (7) After December 31, 1978, but before January 1, 1987, and after he has attained age 70.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the death benefit shall be payable on account of the death of any member who died or dies on or after January 1, 1974, but before January 1, 1979, after attaining age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 65, if he or she had not yet attained age 66, was at the time of death completing the work year for those individuals under specific contract, or during the fiscal year for those individuals not under specific contract, in which he or she attained 65, and otherwise met all conditions for payment of the death benefit.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Board of Trustees may and is specifically authorized to provide the death benefit according to the terms and conditions otherwise appearing in this Plan in the form of group life insurance, either (i) by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in this State for the purpose of insuring the lives of members in service, or (ii) by establishing a separate trust fund qualified under Section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, for such purpose. To that end the Board of Trustees is authorized, empowered and directed to investigate the desirability of utilizing group life insurance by either of the foregoing methods for the purpose of providing the death benefit. If a separate trust fund is established, it shall be operated in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees and all investment earnings on the trust fund shall be credited to such fund.

In administration of the death benefit the following shall apply:

- (1) For the purpose of determining eligibility only, in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean any period of 12 consecutive months or, if less, the period covered by an annual contract of employment. For all other purposes in this subsection "calendar year" shall mean the 12 months beginning January 1 and ending December 31.
- (2) Last day of actual service shall be:
 - a. When employment has been terminated, the last day the member actually worked.
 - b. When employment has not been terminated, the date on which an absent member's sick and annual leave expire, unless he is on approved leave of absence and is in service under the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
 - c. When a participant's employment is interrupted by reason of service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16)

of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, and the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.

- (3) For a period when a member is on leave of absence, his status with respect to the death benefit will be determined by the provisions of G.S. 135-4(h).
- (4) A member on leave of absence from his position as a teacher or State employee for the purpose of serving as a member or officer of the General Assembly shall be deemed to be in service during sessions of the General Assembly and thereby covered by the provisions of the death benefit. The amount of the death benefit for such member shall be the equivalent of the salary to which the member would have been entitled as a teacher or State employee during the 12-month period immediately prior to the month in which death occurred, not to be less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) nor to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

The provisions of the Retirement System pertaining to Administration, G.S. 135-6, and management of funds, G.S. 135-7, are hereby made applicable to the Plan.

A member who is a beneficiary of the Disability Income Plan provided for in Article 6 of this Chapter, or a member who is in receipt of Workers' Compensation during the period for which he or she would have otherwise been eligible to receive short-term benefits or extended short-term benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 and dies on or after 181 days from the last day of his or her actual service but prior to the date the benefits as provided in G.S. 135-105 would have ended, shall be eligible for group life insurance benefits as provided in this subsection, notwithstanding that the member is no longer an employee or teacher or that the member's death occurs after the eligibility period after active service. The basis of the death benefit payable hereunder shall be the higher of the death benefit computed as above or a death benefit based on compensation used in computing the benefit payable under G.S. 135-105 and G.S. 135-106, as may be adjusted for percentage post-disability increases, all subject to the maximum dollar limitation as provided above. A member in receipt of benefits from the Disability Income Plan under the provisions of G.S. 135-112 whose right to a benefit accrued under the former Disability Salary Continuation Plan shall not be covered under the provisions of this paragraph.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 1988, but before January 1, 1999, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after January 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2004, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's

Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2007, but before January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the person or persons designated by the member or, if the member has not designated a beneficiary, to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or, if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, to the deceased retired member's legal representative; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's designated beneficiary or beneficiaries, or surviving spouse if there is no surviving beneficiary, or legal representative if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 135-64(i) reads as rewritten:

"(i) Upon the death of a retired member on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in

advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

~~Upon the death of a retired member on or after July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."~~

SECTION 3.(c) G.S. 135-64 is amended by adding two new subsections to read:

"(j) Upon the death of a retired member on or after July 1, 2007, but before January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

"(k) Upon the death of a retired member on or after January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the person or persons designated by the member or, if the member has not designated a beneficiary, to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or, if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, to the deceased retired member's legal representative; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's designated beneficiary or beneficiaries, or surviving spouse if there is no surviving designated beneficiary, or legal representative if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 3.(d) G.S. 120-4.27 reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-4.27. Death benefit.

The designated beneficiary of a member who dies while in service after completing one year of creditable service shall receive a lump-sum payment of an amount equal to the deceased member's highest annual salary, to a maximum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000). For purposes of this death benefit "in service" means currently serving as a member of the North Carolina General Assembly. "In service" also means service in the Uniformed Services, as that term is defined in section 4303(16) of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Public Law 103-353, if that service begins during the member's term of office. If the participant does not return immediately after that service to employment with a covered employer in this System, then the participant shall be deemed "in service" until the date on which the participant was first eligible to be separated or released from his or her involuntary military service.

The death benefit provided by this section shall be designated a group life insurance benefit payable under an employee welfare benefit plan that is separate and apart from the Retirement System but under which the members of the Retirement System shall participate and be eligible for group life insurance benefits. The Board of Trustees is authorized to provide the death benefit in the form of group life insurance either by purchasing a contract or contracts of group life insurance with any life insurance company or companies licensed and authorized to transact business in the State of North Carolina for the purpose of insuring the lives of qualified members in service, or by establishing or affiliating with a separate trust fund qualified under Section 501(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 1988, but before January 1, 1999, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of twenty-four months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after January 1, 1999, but before July 1, 2004, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System

on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after July 1, 2007, but before January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of a deceased retired member, or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System or Retirement Fund on or after January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the person or persons designated by the member or, if the member has not designated a beneficiary, to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or, if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, to the deceased retired member's legal representative; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Retirement System on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Retirement System, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's designated beneficiary or beneficiaries, or surviving spouse if not survived by a designated beneficiary, or legal representative if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 3.(e) G.S. 128-27(14) reads as rewritten:

"(14) Death Benefit for Retired Members. – Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2004, but before July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse

shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

~~Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2007, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."~~

SECTION 3.(f) G.S. 128-27 is amended by adding two new subsections to read:

"(15) Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after July 1, 2007, but before January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or to the deceased retired member's legal representative if not survived by a spouse; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's surviving spouse or legal representative if not survived by a spouse shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

"(16) Upon receipt of proof, satisfactory to the Board of Trustees in its capacity under this subsection, of the death of a retired member of the Retirement System on or after January 1, 2015, there shall be paid a death benefit to the person or persons designated by the member or, if the member has not designated a beneficiary, to the surviving spouse of the deceased retired member or, if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, to the deceased retired member's legal representative; provided the retired member has elected, when first eligible, to make, and has continuously made, in advance of his death required contributions as determined by the Board of Trustees on a fully contributory basis, through retirement allowance deductions or other methods adopted by the Board of Trustees, to a group death benefit trust fund administered by the Board of Trustees separate and apart from the Retirement System's Annuity Savings Fund and Pension Accumulation Fund. This death benefit shall be a lump-sum payment in the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) upon the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection. Should death occur before the completion of 24 months of contributions required under this subsection, the deceased retired member's designated beneficiary or beneficiaries, or surviving spouse if not survived by a designated beneficiary, or legal representative if not survived by a designated beneficiary or spouse, shall be paid the sum of the retired member's contributions required by this subsection plus interest to be determined by the Board of Trustees."

SECTION 4.(a) G.S.135-6(i) reads as rewritten:

"(i) Record of Proceedings; Annual Report. – The Board of Trustees shall keep a record of all of its proceedings which shall be open to public inspection. It shall publish annually a report showing the fiscal transactions of the Retirement System for the preceding year, the amount of the accumulated cash and securities of the System, and the last balance sheet showing the financial condition of the System by means of an actuarial valuation of the assets

and liabilities of the Retirement System. It shall also publish annually a report on supplemental insurance offerings that are made available to retirees and the extent to which retirees participate in those offerings."

SECTION 4.(b) G.S. 128-28(j) reads as rewritten:

"(j) Record of Proceedings; Annual Report. – The Board of Trustees shall keep a record of all of its proceedings which shall be open to public inspection. It shall publish annually a report showing the fiscal transactions of the Retirement System for the preceding year, the amount of the accumulated cash and securities of the System, and the last balance sheet showing the financial condition of the System by means of an actuarial valuation of the assets and liabilities of the Retirement System. It shall also publish annually a report on supplemental insurance offerings that are made available to retirees and the extent to which retirees participate in those offerings."

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 135-9 reads as rewritten:

"§ 135-9. Exemption from garnishment, attachment, etc.

Except for the applications of the provisions of G.S. 110-136, and G.S. 110-136.3 et seq., and in connection with a court-ordered equitable distribution under G.S. 50-20, the right of a person to a pension, or annuity, or a retirement allowance, to the return of contributions, the pension, annuity or retirement allowance itself, any optional benefit or any other right accrued or accruing to any person under the provisions of this Chapter, and the moneys in the various funds created by this Chapter, are exempt from levy and sale, garnishment, attachment, or any other process whatsoever, and shall be unassignable except as in this Chapter specifically otherwise provided. Application for System approval of a domestic relations order dividing a person's interest under the Retirement System shall be accompanied by an order consistent with the system-designed template order provided on the System's Web site. For orders entered on or after January 1, 2015, payment to a member's former spouse pursuant to any such domestic relations order shall be limited to the lifetime of that former spouse and, upon the death of that former spouse, the former spouse's share shall revert to the member. Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, any overpayment of benefits to a member in a State-administered retirement system or the former Disability Salary Continuation Plan or the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina, including any benefits paid to, or State Health Plan premiums paid on behalf of, any member or beneficiary who is later determined to have been ineligible for those benefits, may be offset against any retirement allowance, return of contributions or any other right accruing under this Chapter to the same person, the person's estate, or designated beneficiary."

SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 128-31 reads as rewritten:

"§ 128-31. Exemptions from execution.

Except for the applications of the provisions of G.S. 110-136, and G.S. 110-136.3 et seq., and in connection with a court-ordered equitable distribution under G.S. 50-20, the right of a person to a pension, an annuity, or a retirement allowance, to the return of contributions, the pension, annuity or retirement allowance itself, any optional benefit or any other right accrued or accruing to any person under the provisions of this Article, and the moneys in the various funds created by this Article, are exempt from levy and sale, garnishment, attachment, or any other process whatsoever, and shall be unassignable except as in this Article specifically otherwise provided. Application for System approval of a domestic relations order dividing a person's interest under the Retirement System shall be accompanied by an order consistent with the system-designed template order provided on the System's Web site. For orders entered on or after January 1, 2015, payment to a member's former spouse pursuant to any such domestic relations order shall be limited to the lifetime of that former spouse and, upon the death of that former spouse, the former spouse's share shall revert to the member. Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, any overpayment of benefits to a member in a State-administered retirement system, the Disability Salary Continuation Plan, or the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina, including any benefits paid to, or State Health Plan premiums paid on behalf of, any member who is later determined to have been ineligible for those benefits, may be offset against any retirement allowance, return of contributions or any other right accruing under this Chapter to the same person, the person's estate, or designated beneficiary."

SECTION 6.(a) G.S. 135-6 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(t) Immunity. – A person serving on the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees shall be immune individually from civil liability for monetary

damages, except to the extent covered by insurance, for any act or failure to act arising out of that service, except where any of the following apply:

- (1) The person was not acting within the scope of that person's official duties.
- (2) The person was not acting in good faith.
- (3) The person committed gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct that resulted in the damages or injury.
- (4) The person derived an improper personal financial benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the transaction.
- (5) The person incurred the liability from the operation of a motor vehicle."

SECTION 6.(b) G.S. 128-27 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(u) Immunity. – A person serving on the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees shall be immune individually from civil liability for monetary damages, except to the extent covered by insurance, for any act or failure to act arising out of that service, except where any of the following apply:

- (1) The person was not acting within the scope of that person's official duties.
- (2) The person was not acting in good faith.
- (3) The person committed gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct that resulted in the damages or injury.
- (4) The person derived an improper personal financial benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the transaction.
- (5) The person incurred the liability from the operation of a motor vehicle."

SECTION 7. G.S. 128-27(a)(1) reads as rewritten:

- "(1)** Any member may retire upon electronic submission or written application to the Board of Trustees setting forth at what time, as of the first day of a calendar month, not less than one day nor more than 120 days subsequent to the execution and filing thereof, he desires to be retired: Provided, that the said member at the time so specified for his retirement shall have attained the age of 60 years and have at least five years of creditable service or shall have completed 30 years of creditable service, or if a ~~fireman~~, firefighter or rescue squad worker, he shall have attained the age of 55 years and have at least five years of creditable service."

SECTION 8. Sections 1 and 3 of this act become effective January 1, 2015. Sections 2, 4, 5, and 6 of this act become effective October 1, 2014. The remainder of this act becomes effective September 1, 2014.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 31st day of July, 2014.

s/ Tom Apodaca
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

s/ Pat McCrory
Governor

Approved 5:10 p.m. this 6th day of August, 2014